

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of Australia
and an Exchange With Reporters at Naval Base Point Loma, California**

March 13, 2023

President Biden. Well, Mr. Prime Minister, welcome to San Diego.

And through both war and peace, we've been together in every endeavor we've had—joint security efforts, and it's been across the board. And that's exactly what we're doing now. I think this is a really consequential agreement we just made, and I think it's going to make a big difference in terms of our—and represents our vision and our values of what needs to be done.

And I think that, you know, we're investing in the manufacturing base in both our countries as well, in addition to the impact on our military capacity. And I think that it's going to be a gamechanger, in my view.

And I think that that, coupled with the Quad, which we're both a part of—including Japan and India—that we have a—an ability to expand the maritime domain of democracies and peace, stability, and some security. I think that's important.

And together, we're working on climate change and regional stability, including an economic coercion that's taking place in your part of the world—not by you, but by others.

And we're going to step up to—for the people of Ukraine. We've stuck together on that. I just had a very good meeting with our colleague from Great Britain on that issue.

And today we're going to discuss the deepening U.S.-Australia commitment to one another. And I really do think we have an opportunity to—I don't view what we're doing as a challenge to anybody. I view it as a means by which we're bringing stability into the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean. And I think it's going to be greeted—when they realize our purpose—by everyone as maintaining stability and security. And we can continue the basic rules of the road.

Thank you. And I look forward to—remember, you invited me down to Australia. I'm coming.

Prime Minister Albanese. Any day.

President Biden. I'm coming. No way out for you.

But thank you.

Prime Minister Albanese. Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. We look forward to welcoming you down in Australia for the Quad meeting in May. I'm sure it will be a very successful visit. And this is our fourth meeting in—I haven't yet been Prime Minister for a year, so we've been in very regular contact and developed a personal friendship and relationship of trust as well, which is something that should be there between our two great nations.

And today what we've really done is just to demonstrate a next chapter in our history together. We—John Curtin, one of my great Labor Prime Minister predecessors, during World War II, said famously: "We turn to America. We look to America in our time of need." And ever since then, we have stood side by side.

And today I think it is very important, very significant that you have agreed for just the second time in history to share this technology. And I think it will make a difference in advancing security and stability in the region.

But also, we, of course, share a common interest in rebuilding manufacturing in our respective countries. And we see this as very much an economic plan, not just a defense and security plan. This high-tech manufacturing capacity that we're building will be really important going forward.

And when we talk about national security, we have shared your language about climate change being a national security issue as well, which is, of course, the entry ticket into credibility in the Pacific, in particular. And we have spent our first year in office really rebuilding relationships in the region based upon our action on climate change.

Your Inflation Reduction Act is the most significant piece of legislation ever on climate, and we are trying to also deal with the challenge which is there.

We so much look forward to welcoming you and Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Kishida down to Australia in just a couple of months now. And then, I'll look forward to being at APEC as well when you're hosting that later this year. So, we're going to have to see a lot of each other on an ongoing basis. But that's——

President Biden. As far as I'm concerned, that's good.

Prime Minister Albanese. That is a very good thing.

And in Australia, I have no doubt that this agreement will be very welcomed in Australia. And it's a long-term plan, but it's been a lot of work to get it right. So thank you to your administration for the leadership which you've shown.

President Biden. Well, I think everything you said about it is accurate.

I'd like to point out one other thing. I want the world to understand—which you—you and I fully understand, as does the Prime Minister of Great Britain—that we're talking about nuclear power, not nuclear weapons. It is critical that the world understand that and that we've worked with the IAEA.

Prime Minister Albanese. Yes.

President Biden. They sign off on what we're doing. And I think it's really very, very important that they will continue to deal with nonproliferation states law.

So I look forward to coming down. So thank you.

Prime Minister Albanese. It's going to be fun, too.

Australia-United Kingdom-United States (AUKUS) Partnership

Q. Mr. President, can AUKUS survive even if there is an isolationist President?

President Biden. Yes.

[*At this point, several reporters spoke at once.*]

Australia-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, why did you choose Australia as a partner?

President Biden. They're totally reliable.

Global Banking System

Q. Did you talk about banks at all today?

President Biden. I didn't ask to borrow any money. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:55 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak of the United Kingdom. Prime Minister Albanese referred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India; and Prime Minister Fumio Kishida of Japan.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, Naval Base Point Loma, CA.

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